

*Office Memorandum* • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, Staff Intelligence Group

DATE: 7 March 1949

FROM : Chief, Western Europe Branch

25X1C4b

SUBJECT: Western Europe Branch Comments on [REDACTED]

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1. Paragraphs 2 and 12 of the Annex: It is felt that the condition of the Communist Parties in western Europe has already deteriorated to a somewhat greater extent than implied in paragraph 2 and that Soviet complacency over this factor is exaggerated in the paper, even though protection of these Parties may not be a Soviet imperative. Conversely in paragraph 12, the present as well as the future position of the Communist Parties of western Europe may be sufficiently adverse to cause Soviet alarm at any time.

2. Paragraph 5: Consideration might well be given to the additional potential which could be derived from countries quickly over-run by Soviet Forces as well as from the resources in countries already under Soviet control.

3. Paragraph 7: In addition to Soviet strategic bombing capabilities, some account should be taken of the possible use of guided missiles against the UK from points seized by Soviet Forces in western Europe.

4. Paragraph 16: The statement is made that western power miscalculation is unlikely to result in war. In so far as this statement applies to a miscalculation by the western powers of Soviet action, there is no disagreement. Action by the western powers, however, is cumulative in its effect on the USSR, and it is conceivable that the western powers may miscalculate Soviet reaction to some additional western power act. The unlikelihood of the western powers' launching a military attack on the USSR appears at present to stem as much from their comparative military weakness as from their superior ability to evaluate current and new situations.

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